

**Testimony of the Registrars of Voters from the Town of Franklin
Before the General Administration and Elections Committee**

Submitted by:

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Registrars of Voters - Town of Franklin
March 9, 2015

Senator Cassano, Representative Jutila and esteemed members of the General Administration and Elections Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on **Raised Bill 1051, An Act Strengthening Connecticut's Elections**. We are the Registrars of Voters from the Town of Franklin. We oppose **Raised Bill 1051** as we believe the appointment of one Registrar of Voters will not strengthen Connecticut's elections.

The current system of elected Registrar of Voters assures minority representation in the office. A second set of eyes in testing memory cards, testing tabulators as well as other duties assures the Registrars' office runs efficiently. We value each other's opinions and our differing skills sets strengthen the services we provide to our voters. We know the needs of our voters and we doubt a regional and/or appointed Registrar's office would be able to do the same. Your constituents should be afforded the right to choose the Registrars whom they trust to run the office in their town. Giving authority to elected municipal employees to choose one Registrar of Voters will make the position an extremely partisan appointment with no minority representation given to your constituents.

We embrace changes in election law that improve and strengthen the Registrars' office. A thorough review of the statewide election procedures and process administered by the Secretary of the State and at each of Connecticut's 169 towns, needs to be conducted to improve the integrity and efficiency of elections. The Registrar of Voters Association (ROVAC) should work in collaboration with the Secretary of the State to effectuate transparent and effective changes. ROVAC's **Raised Bill 6950, An Act Concerning Reforms to Elections Administrations** recommends changes which are not, in many instances, vastly differ from some of the recommendations made by the Secretary of the State's office.

Training and Certification - We look forward to any opportunity to learn more about election laws as it relates to our office. A uniform program would help to assure all election officials are

properly trained. We need training other than "access to the ballot" provided by the Secretary of the State's office at the ROVAC semi-annual conferences. Standardized training needs to be provided to new registrar of voters. A requirement of a bachelor's degree or previous election experience as a requirement of the position would not be needed with a proper certification program.

Post-Election Audits - Our town recently experienced the archaic process of hand counting all the ballots cast in the past election. This was an eight hour process for our small town of 1,200 voters. The SOTS needs to provide technology, which is currently available, to improve accuracy and reduce costs of this part of election accountability.

Cross Endorsement - The SOTS needs to provide a more accurate method of dealing with party assignments for cross endorsed candidates. **Raised Bill 6950** addresses these issues.

End of Night Reporting - The SOTS needs to further pursue technologies that would allow for reporting end of night results in a faster manner. For example, technology should be pursued to allow for transmission of data through the tabulator directly to the SOTS office. The SOTS started to pursue this reporting, but nothing more has developed from it.

As Registrars, we embrace technological advances that assist us in performing our duties. Online voter registration is an example of technology implemented by the SOTS that opened more avenues for your constituents to become registered voters. Implementation of a statewide poll book checklist which interfaces with our electronic centralized voter system could help eliminate potential voter fraud. Emphasis should be placed on improving our current system with training and technological advances rather than focusing on how Registrars are elected into office.

Please feel free to contact us at our office located at the town hall if additional information is needed. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss our concerns about **Raised Bill 1051, An Act Strengthening Connecticut's Elections.**